

VZCZCXRO3117  
PP RUEHBI RUEHCI RUEHNEH  
DE RUEHNE #0359/01 0571035  
ZNR UUUUU ZZH  
P 261035Z FEB 09  
FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5520  
INFO RUCPDOG/USDOC WASHDC  
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC  
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC  
RHHJJPI/PACOM IDHS HONOLULU HI  
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC  
RUEHLM/AMEMBASSY COLOMBO 1575  
RUEHCG/AMCONSUL CHENNAI 4370  
RUEHCI/AMCONSUL KOLKATA 3586  
RUEHNEH/AMCONSUL HYDERABAD 0305  
RUEHKA/AMEMBASSY DHAKA 1971  
RUEHIL/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD 5828  
RUEHKT/AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU 2419  
RUEHKP/AMCONSUL KARACHI 9345  
RUEHBI/AMCONSUL MUMBAI 3409  
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON 5989  
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 7655  
RHOVVKG/COMSEVENTHFLT  
RHMFISS/HQ USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 03 NEW DELHI 000359

SIPDIS

STATE FOR NP, AC, PM

STATE FOR INR/MR

STATE FOR SCA/INS, PM/CBM, PM/PRO

STATE FOR SCA/PPD, PA/RRU

STATE FOR AID/APRE-A

USDOC FOR 4530/IEP/ANESA/OSA FOR BILL MURPHY

E.O. 12958:N/A

TAGS: [KMDR](#) [KPAO](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [IN](#)

SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: BANGLADESH, UNITED STATES,  
PAKISTAN; NEW DELHI.

This countrywide cable reports on relevant media reaction/opinion from India's large non-English press. The Mission reports on English-language media via email through the daily "Early Edition" summary.

-----  
BANGLADESH  
-----

1. "THE REBELLION IN BANGLADESH" editorial in the February 26, 2009, Mumbai edition of centrist Marathi daily SAKAAL. "In a land that has witnessed several rebellions in the recent past, the latest uprising of the Bangladesh Rifles (BR - paramilitary troops) is the most shameful in Bangladesh's history. It is shocking that nearly 50 people were killed when the BR mutinied over a pay dispute at their headquarters in Dhaka. The uprising in the capital underscored the challenges facing the new Prime Minister, Sheikh Hasina Wajed, and the mutinous soldiers are a prime security concern for neighboring India as well. The Bangladesh Rifles are a notorious and corrupt paramilitary force known for its anti-India activities. They are responsible for most of the 100,000+ unauthorized Bangladeshis infiltrating India." A similar editorial appeared in centrist Marathi daily LOKMAT of February 26, 2009.

2. "MILITARY MUTINY IN BANGLADESH" editorial in the February 26, 2009 multi-edition right-of-center Gujarati daily GUJARAT SAMACHAR. "The discontent among the Bangladeshi Rifles was so enormous that their soldiers

targeted its headquarters and held officers hostage. This incident highlights the inflammatory nature of the current situation, despite the establishment of a democratically elected government. Terrorist organizations like Al Qaeda keep a hawk's eye on such a situations, and take full advantage to spread their nefarious activities. It is high time for Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina to take corrective measures to avoid the recurrence of such incidents."

13. "BDR REVOLT IN BANGLADESH," editorial in the February 26 pro-BJP Kolkata Bengali BARTAMAN "The development in Bangladesh is a matter of deep concern for India. If the BDR mutiny gets support from a section of the Bangladesh army the situation may turn even more dangerous. It would be good both for Bangladesh and India if the crisis is settled amicably. Otherwise, the Hasina government will be in difficulty and India too will not be in a comfortable position."

-----  
UNITED STATES  
-----

14. "BARACK OBAMA'S LITMUS TEST BEGINS NOW" editorial in the February 26, 2009 Mumbai-based right-of-center Gujarati daily MUMBAI SAMACHAR. "After completing a month in office, Barack Obama's popularity ratings are dipping, if one is to believe the reports appearing in the American media. Obama's popular slogan 'Yes we can'

NEW DELHI 00000359 002 OF 003

hasn't proved to be magical in making any significant impact thus far. While all this is true, it would be unfair to expect Obama to deliver results considering there are soaring expectations for him under challenging circumstances. Having said that, the Obama administration faces herculean tasks. Resurrecting the economy, withdrawal from Iraq, and confronting enormous challenges in the Afghanistan-Pakistan region are some of the major ones. Besides, one can only hope that the stimulus packages will yield results if they work out as planned. Never in the history of American politics has the U.S. President grappled with such enormous challenges as Obama is now. All eyes are focused on this hopeful president who faces a real litmus test."

15. "OBAMA ERECTING WALLS AROUND AMERICA" editorial in the February 26, 2009 multi-edition centrist Gujarati daily DIVYA BHASKAR. "President Obama is erecting a protectionist wall around America to safeguard the economy and bring back lost jobs. This is clear in his inaugural address to the Congress stating that his administration won't provide tax relief to American companies outsourcing their jobs offshore. The immediate impact will be felt by Indian IT companies, who are the largest beneficiaries of such IT enabled services in the BPO sector. We do not know yet whether or not such a step might also benefit the companies. This also indicates a policy shift from the previous administration. While it is certainly bad news for India, we also need to understand that such a step was in the offing considering the prevailing economic scenario in the United States, where hundreds of thousands of people have lost their jobs. Obama is addressing and pleasing his domestic constituency."

-----  
PAKISTAN  
-----

16. "PAKISTAN-I-TALIBAN?" editorial-page article in the February 26 independent Kolkata Bengali ANANDABAZAR PATRIKA by Assistant Editor Semanti Ghosh. "The western part of Pakistan will become a sanctuary of the joint forces and resources of al-Qaeda and the Taliban if

things continue this way. Whether or not other parts of the country will also come under their control in the near future is hard to say. Pakistani political workers, service members, the middle class, and even media people who have a hardcore attitude have already inclined toward the Taliban. The Punjab province in East Pakistan poses the main concern. Once the Punjabi military and diplomatic associations mingle with the Taliban ideology, the source of danger will not be far from the Indian border. The mainstream Obama Administration is confident that Islamabad is going the wrong way. The danger cannot be averted by making compromises. Obama believes that former President Bush made the greatest diplomatic blunder by ignoring the drug-Taliban-fundamentalist-terrorism network of Afghanistan. Still, Islamabad is on the forefront of the battle against the Taliban. Both India and the U.S. would suffer if Islamabad is put into

NEW DELHI 00000359 003 OF 003

much difficulty."  
WHITE